



ALAN ORD, bass

accompanied by

Grant Hurst, pianist

Wednesday, January 24, 1990
8 pm

Convocation Hall
Arts Building
University of Alberta

Program



Department of Music
University of Alberta

PROGRAM

The Owl Is Abroad
Arise, Ye Subterranean Winds (1692)

Henry Purcell
(1659-1695)

Fahrt zum Hades (1817)
Wie Ulfru fischt (1817)
Der Sieg (1824)
Auf der Donau (1817)
Heliopolis II (1822)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Il lacerato spirito (1857)
from *Simon Boccanegra*

Giuseppe Verdi
(1813-1901)

INTERMISSION

Songs and Dances
of Death (1875)
Trepak
Lullaby
Serenade
Commander-in-chief

Modest Mussorgski
(1835-1881)

Twentieth Century

Martin Kalmanoff
(b 1920)

December Lark
Fugue On "Money"

Robert Kreutz
Sam Raphling
(b 1910)

NOTES

The five Schubert songs were composed to lyrics of Johann Mayrhofer, a poet and close friend. Mayrhofer's verses inspired the composer to create music which is surpassed only by his settings of texts by Goethe and Schiller. These songs are presented in their original keys.

In "il lacerato spirito" (The Tortured Soul) by Verdi, Fiesco, a nobleman and father, laments the death of his daughter, who was seduced by his enemy and died in giving birth.

Death and misery were common themes in many of Mussorgsky's songs. He approaches death with hatred and as an enemy because to him it always came too soon. All four songs are in two parts: the first sets the scene, while the second is devoted to a dialogue or monologue.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Henry Purcell

The Owl is Abroad

The owl is abroad
The bat and the toad
And so is the catamountain
The ant and the mole
Sit both in a hole
And frog peeps out of the fountain.

Arise, Ye Subterranean Winds

Arise, Ye Subterranean Winds
More to distract their guilty minds
Arise, ye winds, whose rapid force can make,
All but the fix'd and solid centre shake.
Come, drive these wretches to that part of the Isle,
Where nature never yet did smile.
Come fogs and damps, whirlwinds and earthquakes there,
There let them howl, and languish in despair,
Rise and obey the powerful prince of the air.

W Shakespeare

Franz Schubert

Fahrt zum Hades - Journey to Hades

The ship resounds, cypresses whisper,
Hark, the spirits' ghostly cries join in;
Soon will I reach the shore, so sombre,
Far, far away from lovely earth.

No sun shines here, nor any stars,
No song is heard, here is no friend,
Receive this my last tear, o heaven!
That this my weary eye will shed.

Fahrt zum Hades - Journey to Hades (continued)

Already the pale Danaids I see,
And the accursed Tantalus;
The ancient river murmurs of peace,
Heavy with death, and oblivion.

To forget, oh this I call a double death,
What I with all my strength attained,
To lose it, and again to win...
When, when will these tortures end, oh when?

Wie Ulfu fischt - Ulfu Fishing

The rod twitches and then bends,
But rises from the water - bare.
You obstinate mermaids give
The fisherman no feast.
What use is all his wit to him,
The fish mockingly dart about;
He stands, firmly anchored to the shore,
Can't go into the water, is held fast by land.

The smooth surface is crinkled,
Agitated by that scaly mob,
which blissfully dart to and fro
Safely down in their depths.
Trout flash by this way and that,
They feel what freedom is,
The fisherman's old ruse does not work.

The earth is mighty beautiful
But a safe place - no.
The icy heights send storms,
Hail and frost spoil
In one torrential downpour
The golden corn, the roses' beauty;
The little fish under their soft roof
Cannot be harmed by any storm on land.

Der Sieg - The Victory

O, for a cloudless life,
So pure and deep and clear.
Primeval dreams still hover
O'er flowers wonderful.

The spirit broke the fetters,
The body's inert lead;
It ranges large and free.

The thoughts are now refreshed
By fruits from paradise;
The ancient curse has gone.

Whate'er I may have suffered,
The victor's palm is mine,
Stilled is now my longing.

The muses chanted
The snake to lasting rest,
And this my hand, it scored!

O, for a cloudless life,
So pure and deep and clear,
Primeval dreams still hover
O'er flowers wonderful.

Auf der Donau - On the Danube

Upon the waves surface floats the boat
Old castles stand high to heaven.
Woods of firtrees ghost-like rustle
And the hearts in bosoms soften.

For man's work is doomed to ruin.
where is tower, where porch, or wall.
Where are they, the strongly armoured
Who to war and hunts had sped?

Sad o'ergrowth is spreading forth.
While pious words' force will wilt.
And we in our small skiff tremble.
Waves, like times, can death portend.

Heliopolis II

Massive rocks piled up high,
Firm ground and staunch support;
Waterfalls, shock of winds,
Incomprehensible power.

Lonely, silhouetted against the sky
Stand monastery or castle ruins,
Store them up in the memory,
the poet thrives on living being.

Breathe the holy atmosphere,
Fling your arms around the world,
Have courage, only consort
With the great and the worthy.

Let the passions rage
In the brazen chord,
When the powerful storms are blowing
You will find the right word.

Verdi

Il lacerato spirito - The Tortured Soul

To you a last farewell, proud palace,
Cold tomb of my angel!
I could not protect you!
Oh cursed man! Vile seducer!
And you, Blessed Virgin,
suffered Her virtue to be ravished?
What am I saying! Delirium! Ah, forgive me!
The tortured soul
Of a sad father
Was doomed to the torment
Of infamy and grief.
The crown of the martyrs
A merciful Heaven has given her;
Restored to the bright angels,
Pray, Maria, for me.

Mussorgsky

Trepak (Russian Dance)

Fields and the woodland, with no one in sight!
Wailing low, the wind storm is eerie
and it seems as if snow rides through the night,
Hunting the lost and the weary,
Look, over there in the dark,
Death approaches.
Holding a serf, to caress him.
Death, with the druckard now dances and chants,
Weaving a spell to possess him:

Death -

"Oh, you are cold, you are old, defenseless,
drink may you gay till you lay there senseless,
Then the witch of blizzards played with you to
charm you,
Pushed you to the forest, seeming not to harm
you.
Poor serf, distress and oppressed and friendless,
Rest, here your sleep will be deep and endless.
See, I will warm and bed you down in soft snow
lying
And I will start a mighty reel around you flying.
Snowy and light, fluff the bed, oh my beauty
Come dance along, make a song, oh my beauty!
Sing all night to soothe him
till the break of day
Sing till the drowsy druckard
Sleeps his life away.
Hear me, you darkness, you wind and forest;
Snow flake and cloud and the sky, combining;
Out of downy morn make a winding sheet,
Like the newly born, wrap him head to feet.
Sweet dreams my friend
Leafy boughs are twining,
Summer has come full in bloom,
The grain is ripe, the sun is shining
Scythes are swinging, now vielding;
Reapers all are singing, and the birds are flying.

Lullaby

Moaning and restless,
The child flushed and ailing
Lies in the dim candle light

Lullaby (continued)

Near him his mother, her love unavailing.
Waits through the long, sleepless night.
Death, the deliverer, silently stealing
Taps at the outer door,
Tchock! Desperate, she turns to him, mute and
appealing.

Death -

"Don't be afraid when I knock!
Dawn is returning, the night light is paling
Watching and weeping so long,
You must be weary.
Your vigil is failing,
Sleep, I will sing him my song.
Your voice is tense with fear,
See, he is crying.
Mine is more soothing in tone."

Mother -

"Quiet! He breaks my heart, helpless there, dying,
Such despair I never have known!"

Death -

"Leave him to me, I will silence his crying;
Hush-a-bye, baby, my own."

Mother -

"Now he is whiter no longer complaining,
So still no even a moan."

Death -

"That is a sign that his fever is waning,
Hush-a-bye, baby my own."

Mother -

"Stop! You are damnable!
If you caress him,
All Joy for me will be gone."

Death -

"No, I will take him a peace will possess him,
Hush-a-bye, baby, my own."

Mother -

"Mercy, he's mine, and you shall not take him!
Chant no more, Leave him alone!"

Death -

"See him, he sleeps and no one can wake him,
Hush-a-bye, baby, my own!"

Serenade

Evening of amethyst, stars all a glisten,
Tender spring, breathing delight!
Trembling, the invalid leans out to listen,
Hearing the whisper of night.
Sleep does not cover her eyes, wide and burning,
Youth pleads with joy not to fade;
But at the midnight, to answer her yearning,
Death sings his soft serenade:

Death -

"Held here in prison so dark and confining,
Soon you will fade quite alone.
Trust, then, your knight, unnamed, doubt
resigning,
I come to free you, my own.
Rise, see how lovely you are!
Your reflection mirrors a face all a light,
Rosy with pleasure, your curls, soft perfection
Veiling a form, milky white;
Eyes, sapphire blue,
fixed and bright as the moon is,
Shine now with radiant fire,
Sweet is your breath and warm,
warm as the noon is,
How you awake my desire!
My ardent pleading will not be denied,
Your desire summoned me here;
Thus I claim my reward, and the prize my bride
Rapture at last is near!
Fragile your body, and your tremor, enthralling.
Come my embrace, how divine,
Stifles your breathing!
Your lover is calling, listen...
Be still... You are mine!

Commander-in-chief

The battle thunders, flashing, searing,
The greedy cannon roar and glow,
Battalions turn, their horses rearing
And red with blood the rivers flow!
The day is burning, men are straining,
Destructive fury sets the pace,

Commander-in-chief (continued)

The combat rages, light is waning,
And still they fight and grant no grace.
As darkness falls the field is lonely;
The troops, with drawing, cease to fight,
All's quiet, moans of wounded only,
Disturb the silence and the night.
Beneath the moon's unearthly light
His mighty battle horse astride,
His bones all shining smooth and white,
appears grim Death!
There, close beside,
the dying groan and join in prayer.
He listens, proud and satisfied.
Noting the carnage, all appraising,
Now he circles his domain
A hill ascending, doward gazing,
He smiles and pausing, smiles again.
and like a fateful bugle call
His voice is heard to summon all:

Death -

"Strife is here ended, for I am triumphant now!
Victor and vanquished alike I subdue.
Life make you enemies, death has united you,
Rise up together and pass in review.
March at a solemn pace, halt and surrender,
All of my troops I record as they pass,
Then your bones to the earth you will tender,
Slumber is sweet under soft growing grass.
Year after year after year will pass by,
Men will forget, none will know where you lie,
But I will not forget! I the undying,
Feasting at midnight will visit your bed.
You will stay, sleeping there, where you are lying.
Thus I command it, all defying.
Dancing, I'll tread down the earth over head,
So that you never can rise from the dead!"

Original Text by A A Golenishtcheve-Kutusov
English adaptation - Marion Farquhar

Twentieth Century

There is no time, no time,
There is no time, not even for a kiss,
not even for this, not even for this rhyme.
It is May and blossoms sway in sifted snow
under the moon.
I only know that I cannot stay
for today it is May and tomorrow is June.
An arrow shot from an idiot's bow;
That is my lot and I must go.
There is not time, not time, there is no time,
not even for a kiss, not even for this,
not even for this rhyme. No!

Robert Hillyer

December lark

I heard a bird sing
In the dark of December,
A magical thing
And sweet to remember.
We are nearer to spring,
Than we were in September.

Oliver Herford

Fugue on "Money"

Workers earn it
Spend - thrifts burn it
Bankers lend it
Women spend it
Forgers fake it
Taxes take it
Dying leave it
Heirs receive it
Thrifty save it
Misers crave it
Robbers seize it
Rich increase it
Gamblers lose it
I could use it

Richard Armour